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p. 66) seems to be confirmed by some Spanish manuscripts of Tacitus (see "Modern Philology," 1 [1903]: 204). The use of "Mandrag" as an adjuration is curious (see "Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy," v. 29 ["Poems of Dunbar," Scottish Text Society, 2: 12]). No doubt more such gleanings by the way could be noted and added to Dr. Starck's study; but they will probably not be numerous and significant enough to impair its value as a substantial contribution to our knowledge about the mandrake.

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NATALIE CURTIS BURLIN, *Negro Folk-Songs* (Hampton Series). In four books. Book I. New York, G. Schirmer & Co., 1918.

SOME months ago there was put into my hands for review a copy of the first book of the Hampton Series of "Negro Folk-Songs," by Natalie Curtis Burlin. Owing to a multitude of other pressing duties, it was laid aside without being opened, and was not again taken out until very recently. Therefore, with all due apologies to Mrs. Burlin, the deeper for the sense of gratitude with which the reading of this little book has inspired me, I now wish to offer an appreciation of it. In it Mrs. Burlin has given to the world at least two of the most moving and pathetic of all Negro spirituals, — "Go down, Moses," and "Couldn't hear Nobody pray." About two years ago it was my privilege to hear these two among many others sung spontaneously and informally by a Southern woman who had been brought up on them by her Negro nurses. Wholly untrained as she was vocally, the singing of those two songs affected her audience deeply. The matter of securing these and other old melodies for publication was spoken of at the time as something much to be desired, but the project could not then be undertaken by any of the group. Therefore it was with a real sense of obligation that I realized what Mrs. Burlin had accomplished, as I read the songs, and noted their faithfulness to Negro style and the entirely successful manner in which proper renditions have been indicated.

The book would lose much without the dignified, sympathetic, and restrained explanations which accompany each number, and which at once put the reader in accord with the spirit of the Negro and his songs. It is a relief to observe the note to the effect that piano accompaniments are for practice only, and then for the benefit of white singers, and to discover the very evident care with which the author gave her results after long listening to the singers and to phonographic records made by them. It does not matter that there are other versions of these songs, or even that every rendition given by different groups varies from every other in some particular. This only emphasizes the truth that the human creative instinct will not be bound, and especially the musical instinct of the Negro. It is sufficient that one good, simple, beautiful, and truthful version of each has been carefully noted for preservation and for the purpose of enriching the musical literature of the world. Indeed, no one can count himself poor who has learned them.

It is a pleasure to know that there are several such books in process of publication; and it is to be hoped that Mrs. Burlin will continue to gather these priceless bits of folk-song before it is too late, thus saving them for

the people who have a right to be proud of them. In so doing she renders a service not only to the members of the Negro race, but to their white brothers, who, by means of an acquaintance with just such expressions of the Negro soul, may come to better understand, love, and respect it. Scientists and students of folk-lore may rely with perfect faith upon work so carefully and patiently done, which, while at every turn displaying the author's sincere and kindly sympathy and appreciation for this long-oppressed people, smacks not at all of the weak sentimentality so much to be deplored in most undertakings of a similar nature.

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